

N.L. CLARKE MEMORIAL EDITION
THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST.

"To the Law, and to the Testimony."

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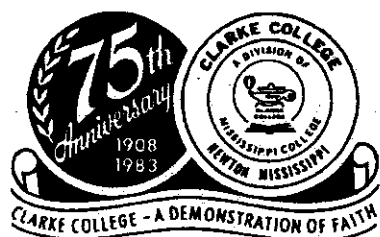
\$1.00 In Advance



Rev. Nathan Lytle Clarke

Born Feb. 7, 1811, Died Sept. 11, 1906.

75 YEARS - A DEMONSTRATION OF FAITH



1983 marks a distinct year for Clarke College: 75 years of Christian Education in Mississippi. On September 23, 1908, Clarke first opened her doors to students under the auspices of the Baptist General Association of Mississippi. Thus, she becomes the only state Baptist college founded by an organized Baptist body.

Considering the economic conditions of the time - average pay was \$.75 per day in Mississippi - establishing a Baptist college in a rural area of the state was a bold leap of faith. At the first historical "encampment" at Blue Mountain in 1906 Dr. W.T. Lowery, then President of Mississippi College, delivered the need for Christian Education in Mississippi. W.B. Sansing, editor of the *Mississippi Baptist*, published the speech and the movement soon gained momentum across the state.

This growing concern, coupled with the recent death of the beloved N.L. Clarke of Newton County so touched the hearts of area Baptists, that the dream of a Baptist college named in honor of N.L. Clarke was born.

Nor was the college's namesake chosen lightly. Born in North Carolina in 1812, Bro. Clarke moved to Mississippi early in his life. He served as a missionary with the confederate army during the Civil War. He pastored many churches in the area, received 2,500 converts into the church, baptised over 1600, was at the bedside of over 500 in death, organized 25 churches, performed 3000 marriages and a like number of funerals. He was largely responsible for fueling the fires of Christian education in the area, and so it was proper that in his death a Baptist college was born.

After fierce competition between a half dozen towns, Newton was chosen as the site and on September 22, 1908, the college opened her doors with an enrollment of 104.

From that very first year there were difficulties, even desperate, times. Shortly after noon on January 13, 1909, fire broke out in the men's dormitory. Newton firemen rushed to the scene only to discover they lacked 1000 feet of hose to reach the building. They watched as the dormitory crumpled and fell.

This first large disaster seemed to set the precedent for many catastrophes to come, for the only thing that was damaged was the building itself. The spirit of faculty, students and friends was strengthened as they rallied to build anew.

Financial difficulties arose, and yet the enrollment hovered around the 200 mark and in 1913 the Mississippi Baptist Convention voted to include Clarke as one of their denominational colleges.

Still, financial insecurity threatened to be the ruin of Clarke College. Through faith in God, trust in the basic honesty of students and parents, and "innovative" financing Clarke was able to continue. M.O. Patterson as president introduced the "Buy a Bale" program and admitted students who could provide two bales of cotton. More than once livestock was accepted for payment on tuition.

There was a rapid turnover in administration during these lean years (nine presidents from 1908-1929) and adversity was a way of life. But Clarke continued to do what she has always done - carry on.

By the early 1930's many felt that the college should be closed, and indeed, the convention voted to do that very thing. They had, however, misjudged the tenacity and determination of Clarke supporters.

Since no buyer for the school could be found, a group of Christian business men formed a holding company and were allowed to lease the college for a period of five years for \$1.00 per year. Clarke carried on.

Enter John F. Carter. Dr. Carter was already a legend by the time he accepted the presidency of Clarke College in 1930. Indeed, he had been a faculty member since 1919 and had served as President once before. Throughout the turmoil of the Great Depression, Dr. Carter served as a faithful shepherd, ever conscious of the sustaining force of God in the life of this little college. Until his death in 1981 he maintained a close relationship to Clarke.

The city of Newton, realizing the valuable asset they held in the college, came to the rescue time again as aid was needed. The college doggedly held to its principles and silenced those who said the college could not survive by continuing to carry on.

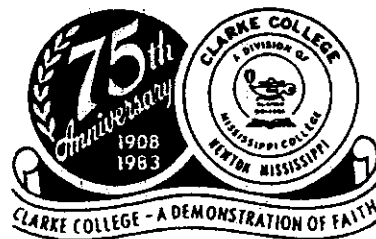
In 1945 the Mississippi Baptist Convention reclaimed Clarke and the college has operated under its controls since that time. Sustained leadership was provided as W.E. Greene and his successor, W.L. Compere, served for ten and twenty-two years respectively as President.

Still, Clarke College carries on. The recent merger with Mississippi College has brought change, but change that has not touched the heart of the purpose of Clarke. Lewis Nobles, President of Mississippi College, recently told a group of Clarke alumni, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools doesn't quite know how to take the Mississippi College-Clarke merger. In times past the larger school would obscure the smaller one, and yet we have insisted that we will maintain the separateness and identity of Clarke College. While we have legally merged, Clarke will continue to operate in and of itself." He went on to say that "Clarke will continue to recruit and attract students seeking liberal arts education from the Christian perspective, especially those who seek training in church related vocations. Should students want to stay for two more years of Mississippi College sponsored upper division work, we will provide this in a number of areas."

Nobles responded that "Endowment, accounting procedures, and fund raising are kept entirely separate." He closed by encouraging alumni to renew their commitment to Clarke College by directing Christian young people to the college.

New programs have been added, including men's and women's intercollegiate basketball, to round out the offerings of extracurricular activities. Existing programs have been strengthened with new doctorate level faculty.

While we cannot possibly know what the future holds for Christian education, we do know that for nearly 75 years Clarke College has braved fire, financial difficulties, war, loss of support from her constituency, and depression. Clarke has truly been a demonstration of faith and with God's help she will continue.



REV. NATHAN LYTLE CLARKE

Rev. Nathan Lytle Clarke was born in Burke county (now Caldwell county near the Catawba river, North Carolina, February 7, 1811. He was the fifth child of Jeremiah and Eleanor Clarke, and he had eight brothers and sisters. His mother was a Boone, a direct descendant of the great pioneer, Daniel Boone.

Jeremiah Clarke was a sturdy farmer, and stood among the first families of that country. He was not a professed Christian until near the close of his life. Mrs. Clark was a staunch Baptist, and the home had a family altar, around which the family was gathered every night for worship. Mrs. Clarke died in the year 1820, when young Nathan was only eight years old. Mr. Clarke never married again. He soon joined the church and spent the remainder of his life in the interest of his family and Maker.

Nathan Clarke was very studious, and he received the best educational advantages the country then afforded. The reading of the "Western Carolinian," a democratic newspaper, the Bible, and Whelpley's General History created his great thirst for knowledge, which developed to marvelous proportions.

Opportunities to hear preaching in those days were rare. The first sermon young Clarke ever heard to remember, was preached by a Methodist Circuit Rider, and the first Baptist preacher was a Mr. Dodson, who preached the funeral of a neighbor lady. From early youth, he said his prayers regularly, and was very pious.

In 1835, his father's estate having been divided up and the old house abandoned, N.L. Clarke went to Sumpter county, Alabama to enter the mercantile firm of W. Carleton and Co. He remained there for only a short time, for his employers sent him to Gainesville, Alabama to take charge of their business. On the 10th day of June, 1838, he was baptized into the fellowship of the Baptist church of Gainesville, by Rev. Sterling G. Jenkins. Twelve or thirteen others were baptized at the same time, among them two others, W.B. Cobb and B.F. Courtney, who also became preachers. Being impressed to preach, and not willing to begin at Gainesville, he soon left there to return to his old home where he might better prepare himself for the ministry. He traveled the whole distance of 600 miles on horseback. He spent the winter months of 1838-39 in school. On the 11th day of May, 1839, he was licensed to preach by the Lower Creek Baptist Church, North Carolina. On the following Sunday, May 12, in the same church, by the request of Pastor Powell,

he preached his first sermon, using the following text: "Whosoever is ashamed of me, and My word before this sinful and adulterous generation, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and the holy angels." He spent the summer and early fall studying and teaching the community. He was also superintendent of the Sunday school.

On the fourteenth day of November, 1839, N.L. Clarke and Miss Evaline D. Powell were married. Rev. Phillip Powell, uncle to the bride, officiating. The bride was seventeen years of age. On February 3, 1840, they left for Mississippi, a distance of 600 or 700 miles, in a buggy, never to again return to their native State, as it afterwards developed. They spent some time at Gainesville, Ala., and in April, 1840, they settled at Dekalb, Kemper County, Mississippi. In June, 1840, he attended the Baptist State Convention at Wahalak. In October, 1840, he settled in his new home in the eastern part of Neshoba county. He and his united with Unity Baptist church, Kemper county, eight miles from his home, and on April 11, 1841, he was ordained by that church to the full work of the ministry, Elds. Ross, Burwell, Barnes, and Farrar constituting the presbytery. He soon became pastor of Black Jack Grove church, Kemper county, where he first administered the ordinance of baptism. He became a member of the Mt. Pisgah Association in the year 1841, of which body he remained a member till his death. In 1842, he assisted in the organization of Rocky Creek church, Newton county, and became its pastor. It was necessary to dig a pool for baptizing. That pool, lined with the same plank, which were placed there 64 years ago, is still in use. In 1844 he again attended the Baptist State Convention, at Palestine church, Hinds county, and for the first and only time saw the capital city, Jackson, and here he first saw a railroad.

In November, 1847, Rev. N.L. Clarke and family moved to Newton county, near Decatur, and on Saturday before the first Sunday in January, he went into the organization of Decatur Baptist church, then called Enon, and at once became its pastor. In January, 1849, he became missionary under the appointment of the Mt. Pisgah Association, but remained pastor of the Decatur church. Thus he labored till the breaking out of the Civil War; and during the war was a missionary among the soldiers at Meridian and other

nearby points, but always returning once a month to preach at Decatur. For eight years after the war he was a missionary.

In the year 1855, at the suggestion of Rev. N.L. Clarke, the General Association was organized. It has been charged that the General Association, was organized to oppose the work of the Baptist State Convention. But this is not so. At that time the Convention was doing no mission work at all in south-east Mississippi. The only body then doing mission work in this part of the State, to any extent, was the Mt. Pisgah Association. By this time it had practically evangelized its territory, but beyond its bounds were numerous and vast destinations. True to Baptist principles and practices, Brother Clarke did not feel that the Mt. Pisgah Association, of which he was a missionary had the right to go into the territory of other associations to work. The work needed to be done, and the only solution to the problem, seemingly, was the organization of a general association, through which a district associations could co-operate in doing mission work. So the General Association was organized to do this neglected and much needed work.

On September 8, 1859, his wife, in giving birth to a child, died. Unto them were born ten children--five sons and five daughters. In the 25th day of September, 1860, he married Mrs. Emily Puckett, who still survives him. Unto them was born one child -- a son.

During the war between the states Brother Clarke did much missionary work, especially among the soldiers in Mississippi and Alabama, all the while supplying one or two churches as pastor. After the war he was a missionary for several years, preaching in the counties of Newton, Scott, Neshoba, Kemper, Lauderdale, Smith, Jasper, Jones, Simpson, and Covington counties, traveling from two to three thousand miles each year, facing heat and cold, crossing swollen streams and enduring many other hardships. Among the churches he established during this time was the First Baptist church of Newton, in the year 1869, of which he was pastor without a break for 35 years.

Having been a missionary for about twenty years, Brother Clarke, in about the year 1870, settled down to a full pastorate, serving four churches from his home in Decatur. In the year 1890, he moved to the town of Newton began the publication of the "MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST",

the newspaper of the General Association. But he kept up his pastoral work. He remained at Newton till January, 1904, when he and Mrs. Clarke, who is now about 75 years old, broke up housekeeping, and moved into the home of his son, G.P. Clarke, near Decatur, where they remained for a little more than one year, when they went to live with their son, Dr. L.M. Clarke, at Pelahatchie. Here they remained until a few weeks before his death, when they returned on a visit to Decatur, where, at the home of his son, G.P. Clarke, he fell and dislocated his hip, from the results of which he died Sept. 12, 1906, in his 95th year. Thus ended one of the most notable careers in the history of Mississippi.

• Following is a brief summary of his life's work:

He has received more than 3,000 converts into the church, and has baptized more than 2,000.

Has aided in the organization of about 100 churches, and has helped to ordain at least 150 preachers and deacons.

Was pastor of Decatur church for 58 years and Newton church for 35 years, without a break, and missed but few appointments.

Travelled on horseback, while missionary, more than 75,000 miles, or three times the distance around the earth.

Was president of the General Association for 51 successive years, and the only president it ever had. He was also moderator of Mt. Pisgah Association for 51 years in succession, and was present every meeting of these bodies since the time he became identified with them.

He performed hundreds of marriage ceremonies, and was editor of the MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST for 15 years.

Only once during his married life did he fail to hold family worship night and morning, when at home, and that was the night of the death of his first wife. He early formed the habit of daily reading 2 chapters in the Bible, which he kept up throughout life.

W.B.S.

REV. T.J. MILEY, NEWTON.

How I came to know Rev. N.L. Clarke was through my parents on both sides, father and mother. When they were children, this servant of God preached at their father's house, and the school house in their community. In this way they made his acquaintance, and back as far as I can remember they would speak of him as the greatest preacher and the best man they ever saw. When I was 24 or 25 years old I went to hear him preach my uncle Henry Myers' funeral at Sharon church, in Smith county. This was the first time that I ever saw him. Later I heard him preach at a school house near where Sardis Baptist church now stands. I was profoundly impressed with his sermons. Later, while I was in school at Sylvaena, I attended church there and he was pastor. It was there that I learned to love and reverence him most. I had him in my home, and sat at his feet for instruction. His life and preaching was a real inspiration to me.

The most impressive feature to me of this great man was his life, his daily life, clean, pure from the moral defilements of the world. He loved the Book of his God, and loving it he obeyed it. It was his meat and drink to do his Father's will. I love to think of him and his godly work and life. I expect to meet him and see the crown placed on his head by my own dear Lord. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Write, blessed are the dead which are in the Lord from henceforth: yea, sayeth the Spirit, that they rest from their labors; for their works follow them."

REV. J.E. CHAPMAN, NEWTON

While others are paying their tributes of respect to the memory of our revered brother, Rev. N.L. Clarke, I want to add a small mite; in doing so, feel I can not do better than to give a few extracts from the last letter that I received from him, dated August 3, 1906.

"Dear Brother Chapman: It seems I will not get to the Board meeting at Newton. I regret it very much. God bless you all and his work. I was so long in the work without disappointment it now seems hard; but the Lord liveth, and blessed be His name and Kingdom. I trust you may have a good meeting.

I yet hope to be at the annual meeting at Fellowship. Oh, for divine help, write these lines that I may not appear indifferent. I love the cause; it is the cause of God and salvation. God is blessing his cause wherever it is."

The present generation does not fully know what he was, nor what he has done for this country, and hence cannot properly appreciate him. The civil, moral and spiritual advantages we are enjoying to day is due to him more than any other man who ever lived in Mississippi. The time spent, labor performed, sacrifices made, and sufferings undergone by him, will not be fully known to man; but they have gone on record in heaven, and in "that day" oh, what a rich reward will be given him.

As a man, his life was the purest writer ever knew. Being closely associated with him for a number of years, I think I am prepared to bear testimony to this great truth. As a minister of the gospel none I ever knew were as faithful. I have heard many men preach, but he was the noblest "Roman" of them all.

He has left an impress on this country that will last for generations to come. His consuming affection was love of souls and the cause of the Master whom he loved so well and served so faithfully.

I could write pages on things concerning him and his great work, but suffice it to say that his entire life was such that all men delighted to honor him, and he passed away with a halo of glory resting on his life, such as few men are ever privileged to enjoy. Let us emulate him in life and work, and too, will be richly rewarded in "that day."

J.W. PHILLIPS, MEWTON

Not in his gentle mother earth alone,

In comfortable sleep he lies enshrined;

But in the hearts of those he left behind

He tills a place that still must be his own.

With those whose works, to dates to men unknown,

Shall follow in their wake, we feel, we find

His words, his ways upon our inmost mind

Engraved and written in the purest gold.

A. VENABLE, D.D., MERIDIAN

Perhaps no man ever lived in the country whose general good was so uniform as Rev. N.L. Clarke's. He was a man of many proportions and thoroughly able in body. Good health and active life marked the career in his youth to old age. The nature of his work subjected him to all kinds of exposures discomfort and peril. Neither, hot nor cold, calm nor storm, swollen streams, bridgeless and perilous, ever deterred him inspiration of a noble purpose a splendid constitution and vitality mad him superior to the hostile forces which for the health and cut short life of countless multitudes. vigorous constitution ever have performed the which he did with a zeal and tireless energy. Than a half century covering an area of hundreds of miles. Brother Clarke was a man of unusual natural endowment. His mind was strong and quick. He was a keen observer of men and natures. His wide reading, study of the scriptures and sources of information helped him in the interpretation of God's word had disciplined his mind until it was at command. His imagery was of high order, indicating a fertile highly chastened imagination. He brought to everyone a well formed and great purpose. By his beliefs he stood unwavering. His loyalty and purpose, and love of forms and methods which he tried and found practical and effective made him appear to be as opposed to change. Brother Clarke was not opposed to progress, but he was slow to change his plans and only when he believed there was danger of loss of what he believed to be vital and imperative. His good sense, long experience and confidence in the soundness that he held as true and made him a nester of his brethren. His will was a well known and duly strong force in the ranks of his brethren, whether layman or minister. He was richly endowed with that indescribable trait which some have called personal magnetism-- that will project one's thought, convey will into others, and move men. This was due to the greatness of his personality under the pressure of compelling conviction. This made him an oracle among people. Commanding in presence, cogent in strong in conviction, strong as a lion, and gentle as a lamb, he was prince among men. As a preacher he was not the

emotional type, nor was strong in his forms of thought. And made not effort at rhetorical sermons, but simple, strong and earnest, he often became eloquent; sometimes in the prime of his ministry, he was overwhelming. His name has been the synonym for all that was sought in the character, life and work of a preacher of the highest type. To know him was to love him, as he moved among the people and sought to lift them to higher things.

He knew but one theme, and that theme was a crucified risen and enthroned Lord Jesus Christ. To magnify the Christ and make Him a real saving power in the hearts of a sinful people absorbed his thought and inspired his tongue in all he preached. To enthrone Christ as Lord in the hearts of his people was the goal of his preaching and held the supremacy over all things else. To this theme and the consummation of this purpose he brought all his powers of mind and heart. He had an abiding confidence in the simple Gospel to save men. He relied upon nothing else, and in this confidence all his efforts were spent in the propagation of this doctrine.

The Bible he held to be inspired, the simple and only authority in matters of religion. It was to him a living reality. He was endowed with a high order of spiritual intuition, perfectly sane, which enabled him to grasp the heart of a passage and apply its meaning to his own spiritual needs as he sought to communicate it to others. His knowledge of systematic theology was profound and extensive, but his preaching was the expository type, Biblical rather than theological. His abiding faith in the power of the Gospel to save men and transform the world forces and bring them under tribute to the age long and world wide conquest of Christ made him hopeful. In his last few years he was cheerful as he caught the vision of that glorious day when the last outposts of earth should be a deed to the kingdom of God and Christ.

As a writer he had few equals. His sentences were models of simplicity and terseness. Both his thoughts and forms of statement were dignified, often stately, and always characterized by perspicacity. He showed great wisdom in the choice of his subjects, selecting those which would be most helpful to his readers. As an editor he sought to adapt himself to the needs of his people, and right well did he serve them. Had he chosen he could have become quite as noted as a writer as he was an organizer. When one thinks of that great life which is now closed, one is

reminded to ask when shall we see his like again? And how shall we make the most of the heritage he has left us? The results of his labors, and his fragrant influence he has left us, an abiding benediction.

CAPT. A.J. BROWN, NEWTON.

I esteem it a high privilege to write an humble tribute to as great and good a man as Rev. N.L. Clarke.

I had known Mr. Clarke from very early youth; but not until he moved, with his family, to Newton in the year 1890, when he commenced the publication of the MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST, did I become his neighbor and more intimate friend.

The Biographical sketch included in this issue of the Mississippi Baptist, will convey to the reader the amount of work done by Mr. Clarke, and now I speak of him as a Christian, preacher, and citizen. As a Christian, it is well understood that he had great piety, and was always willing to testify for the Master. He had great zeal for the church, and church work.

The most notable feature of his character, to my mind, was his fidelity to duty. As a preacher Mr. Clarke stood usually above those of his brethren, with whom he came in contact. His well stored mind, and particularly in biblical knowledge, enabled him to reach all classed to whom he preached, and say something in every one of his sermons calculated to convey a comforting message, a warning rebuke to sin, an unfolding of scriptural truths to all who were willing to hear and appreciate the blessings of God's word. In prayer few men were more able. At times his prayers, apparently without effort or ostentation, were beautiful, eloquent, sublime. As a citizen he was patriotic and honorable in his dealings -- taking an active interest in everything pertaining to the good of our country. As a friend, I must say I never appreciated nor knew of the good qualities he possessed, until I became closely drawn to him by association and personal contact. He was a high toned, liberal minded gentleman, a very polite, genial companion, naturally a good mind, liberal education, fine memory, which was largely enhanced by close study of good books, and particularly the Bible (of which he was very conversant), which gave him a fund of information rarely excelled. In discussion he was firm in his ideas, yet considerate and reasonable with those who differed from him.

REV. W. H. BOONE McHENRY

I am glad to have the privilege with a great many others, to say something in this issue of the Mississippi Baptist, of the man who is due more credit than any other, for the strong hold that Baptists now have on East Mississippi. His power as a leader made him easily among the first person one would see at a gathering. Indeed, no one could be in his company without knowing that they were in the presence of a great man. He served his generation well and I earnestly believe that he will be considered great in any generation that will live after him. He being a distant relative and a writer, furnished a reason for heart to heart talks on several occasions. I found him to be faithful, consistent and Christ like, weighing well every matter that came before him.

N. L. Clarke was a great defender of the truth he contended earnestly for that which he believed Gods word taught. And while he possibly was not without faults incident to his life, yet possessing character without reproach. We shall raise him most when we meet in the General Association, where he has been without fail. It seems to me God will in memory of such service, delight to say "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." I thank God for the remembrance of such a life.

DEACON L. A. DUNCAN, MERIDIAN

A leading characteristic of Brother N. L. Clarke, was faithfulness to duty. He was always true to his convictions. That he was courteous in dealing with Christians of different faith, he was unyielding in his practice.

He was a close student of the Bible, especially of the New Testament, and firm in his adherence to "the faith once delivered unto the saints." In patient continuances in "every good word and work", he cannot be excelled.

Though dead, he yet liveth in the hearts of his people and his influence cannot die.

**REV. L. J. CAUGHMAN,
TAYLORSVILLE, MISS**

Somewhere between the year 1867 and 1869 it was my privilege to meet with and form the acquaintance of Rev. N. L. Clarke. At that time he was laboring by appointment of the Mt. Pisgah Association I first heard him preach at a school house near where I lived in Smith county, and where he organized a church which at his own suggestion, was styled Sharon church of Regular Baptists. I then being a Luther an and a stranger to Baptist principles, did not at all enjoy brother Clarke's teaching, but the more I heard him the better I liked him, and it was he who led me to a closer study of God's Word and instilled into

my mind Baptist principals, and at whose hands I was baptized into the fellowship of Sharon church. In a few years after I joined the church; brother Clarke, by request of the church, assisted by another minister, ordained me to fill the office of deacon, and in that capacity I served the church for two years, when I felt impressed to preach, and on a statement made by brother Clarke to the church, I was liberated, and in a short while my ordination was called for, when brother Clarke, aided by two other ministers ordained me to the full work of the gospel ministry.

Brother Clarke preached for the church at Sharon for a term of fifteen years, during which he preached at the Sylvaena and also preached to some few destitute places in Smith County. I was associated a great deal with this good brother during my first work in the ministry, and received from him counsel that has proven a blessing to me. I can truthfully say that he has been a father to me in the ministry, and I shall ever cherish his memory. The name of Rev. N. L. Clarke will go down in history. Even those who knew him and did not agree with him in all that he believed and advocated admired him because of his honesty and faithful works. It is rightfully said, a true and faithful servant of God has fallen, a good man gone, and while his body lies in its mother earth, his spirit is at rest with God's redeemed and with the Savior of us all.

M. J. TATUM, HICKORY

You give all a chance to write a short letter on the life and usefulness of the greatest and noblest man that ever trod the soil of Newton County, the banner county of all East Mississippi; and who can this man be only the venerable old soldier, Rev. N. L. Clarke.

Away back in the early fifties, when I was quite small, this noble man of God used to preach near my father's home and he, and my mother, too, were faithful soldiers of the cross. This good man would come and with us, and then it was that I was taught, and learned to love him. If he ever made a crooked step, I don't reckon any one ever saw it. He has been to my home and stayed with me a great many times, and we were always proud to see him come, and be too, said that he loved to come and stay with us to have me sing for him, as my father used to have me sing for him when I was very small. To say that he was a great man is not saying too much. Young men, is there not another in all this numberless host that can measure up to this great and good man? If I were a young man today, I would spend a life in trying to follow in the footsteps of this good and useful man of God.

REV. Z. K. GILMORE, OTOE.

A great leader has fallen asleep and is laid with our fathers. In the death of our esteemed and much loved brother, N. L. Clarke, who has spent his life in the cause that he so much loved, a work in which he never tired.

Through heat, cold, wet and dry, he has gone to carry the message of love. The cause of Christ has lost an earnest, faithful, and zealous worker. He was deep in Bible doctrine and an uncompromising Baptist, always ready to go, always on hand, ready to counsel, and a great counsellor he was. He was a liberal giver. No one has ever lived that loved the Mt. Pisgah and General Associations more than Brother Clarke did. It will be sad when we meet in the General Association this fall without its great leader. But while we meet his spirit will be in the peaceful presence of Him whom he loved so dear.

REV. J. H. PURVIS, FLORA

I wish to express my sentiments and regards for our late and lamented brother N. L. Clarke. While I never had the privilege of meeting him, I have from a child always heard his noble life praised. Of late years I have read of him a great deal, and surely he might be termed the father of the Baptist cause in East Mississippi. While his name may not have been written as high as some, it has been written on the hearts of mankind. He has left us an example and influence that eternity alone can reveal. Our loss can not be estimated. He served his generation well and God has fallen him home to receive a crown which will sparkle with many stars.

Let us all imitate his noble character and his zeal for God, and press onward. Let some intimate friend write up his life. It ought to be in every home.

REV. W. P. CHAPMAN, NEWTON

In making up the memorial number of the Mississippi Baptist, I wish to pay the tribute to profound respect to our venerable brother and departed father, Rev. N. L. Clarke. As a New Testament preacher and missionary Baptist he had but few equals, and no superiors; for earnestness, perseverance and godly consecration, he stands out as one of the brightest stars in the firmament of gospel evangelism. His record, as a man, citizen, husband, father, and advocate of civil righteousness, was outstanding. While I did not have the pleasure and benefit of his association as much as some other brethren, yet I know him as one of God's noble men and lay this tribute at his feet in loving remembrance of his devoted life to God and humanity.

I heard Brother Clarke preach but seldom, but never without large profit and pleasure, and never had a more attentive nor helpful listener when I had occasion to "hold forth the word of truth" in his presence.

In 1876, in company with Brother M. T. Martin, I drove in an open buggy, drawn by a span of good travellers, from Crystal Springs to Leaf River church, near where Ellisville, now stands, and met Brother Clarke, the first time I had ever seen him in that great body of Baptists. He then reminded me of a master workman who "needeth not to be ashamed," he had his work so well in hand and his adjustants and co-laborers so thoroughly identified with himself. There were six men present who stood together like a phalanx of Roman soldiers; these were Judge Thigpen, a distinguished layman, clerk of the body, and Elders Johnston (the "piney woods rifle,"), Freeman, Murrell, Wm. Thigpen, and N. L. Clarke. These six, of whom Clarke was by all odds and common consent the leading spirit, made, with the help of many good brethren under God, the General Association a wonderful power for good in the piney woods of South and Southeast Mississippi. There I saw Brother Clarke at his best in a iquensic scrap. He and Brother Martin "locked horns" on Mississippi College, and especially the ministerial educational feature of the institution: Clarke claiming that they were educating men for the ministry, and Martin insisting that they were educating men who were already called of God and approved by the churches in the ministry. Martin, as many have occasion to remember, was no mean antagonist, and Brother Clarke could only effect a condition of iron bound caution as a safeguard at Clinton, the seat of the College, in the Board of Ministerial Education, who had the matter in charge. While Martin had the sympathy of those present in the general proposition, Clarke decidedly had it in the safeguard compromise. There is a difference, if you look at it right. We are to educate only those whom God calls into His ministry, and not young men who may prefer the ministry as a profession and therefore call themselves. I am sure we cannot be too careful in that; for from several indications there are probably not a few men in the ministry now whom God has not called, a few at least whom the devil very adroitly uses to do his measley work. Brother Clarke's well tried conservatism was the gold in steel that accounted for the sturdy robustness in the barometer of his noble character.

Others have sketched him as a man. a preacher, and as a citizen.

I have tried to write of home only as I have seen and known him, and believe that his memory is worthy of all that has been said of him. He believed, therefore he spoke - he was a man of conscience as well as of sense and sound judgement. He loved the Lord whom he served, and tried with all of his life forces to serve Him faithfully. He loved the people also, therefore he was their servant. Napoleon, while travelling incognito on one occasion met a French women of the people as she was hurrying forward as said to her, "Whither so hurriedly, my good woman?" when she replied, "I am going to a place where I can see the Emperor when he passes." The great general said, "Is Napoleon any better than the former ruler? Are they not all tyrants?" The woman made reply, "The Burborus were the rulers of the riclie and nobles, but Napoleon is OUR ruler." Brother Clarke was emphatically the people's man and leader, and they loved to follow him. "His praise" is not only in the gospel through out all the churches," but on all of the tongues of all the saints, and love for him is in all their hearts. "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like a shock of corn cometh in his season," and us such Brother Clarke has finished his course with joy, and gone home to rest.

REV. A. V. ROWE, WINONA.

The presence of this venerable man, Rev. N. L. Clarke, among his brethren was always attended with pleasure to himself and with profit to them. His life was pitched on the plane of a servant of Christ. This was his highest ambition, his noblest attainment. This service was manifested, and was his delight, in serving the cause of Christ where ever in God's providence his lot was cast. The meek and gentle spirit shone out in all he said or did. It was not my privilege to have personal acquaintance with him until it might be said of him, as Paul said of himself, "such a one as Paul the aged." It was a cool October evening when I first met him, and as I stood to greet him, I could not but feel the majesty of a noble personality. Here was a man who had attained his ninthy second year, and during the many years of varied experience no one had ever doubted his Christian integrity, or had lost faith fin him as a man of God. He had stood at the front in directing the activities of his brethren and the churches, many of which he had planted, were glad to recognize in him the qualities of a great leader. Now enfeebled by age, he could not find it in his heart to be absent from the assembly of the men whom he loved and as in all the past, still, show himself their servant for Christ's sake. It was beautiful to see the love and esteem in which he was held by the people, young and old, as he joined in the work of the General Association, or chatted at the fireside.

I can not help saying, "He gave to the world the best he had, and the best came back to him." And that best was love. He did not suffer himself to be lost amid the army of young men who had come up to help on the work which for more than a generation he was foremost in. His interest in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom made him alert and helpful in its affairs to the very last, and there was undoubted joy at the increased activity of the churches in development along mission lines as marked in the last few years of its history, and in this was especially manifested spirit, for he had no greater joy than to know, that the churches were doing well. And if one thought above another mark his attitude to the churches, I dare say he would have voiced it in the words of Paul, "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved, and longed for my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved." May a double portion of his spirit fall upon the pastors, and may these churches that he so much loved exemplify in their work all that was near to him, because him, because it was dear to our Lord.

REV. G. W. RAINER, McLAIN

I first made my acquaintance with Brother Clarke at Mt. Gilead Church, Laurderale County, perhaps about 1878, where he preached the funeral of the father of the Gressett family of which A. Gressett was a preacher and an active member of our General Association. To say that I was impressed by his reverential and dignified appearance is but stating it mildly. His sermon, dowering on the happiness of the righteous dead, was full of comfort to the children that were there. We took dinner together at Brother Pigford's where he asked me all the questions that was necessary to learn of my call to the ministry; and then he gave me his own experience of grace and call to preach. I was much impressed by his piety and godliness and felt I had been made better for having met him.

Our next meeting was in 1880 when I had moved into Lauderdale County and when I went into the Mt. Pisgah Association and we worked together until his death. We labored together in a number of meetings that were all pleasant and agreeable. I have been an officer within the body of the General Association since 1893, and the unity and mildness which he displayed in that body are well known by all. This body he presided over for fifty years. And oh, how we will miss him.

May God deal kindly with the children and especially with his companion whose faithfulness stood by to the end. To be with N. L. Clarke was to have your life made better. I availed myself of opportunities to be with him.

He was social and refined in his manner, adapting himself in a remarkable degree to those of whom he came in contact. All young men should attempt to emulate the character and practice the virtues of Mr. Clarke.

It has been my pleasure to refer to him in some scriptural difficulties, and he always gave me, cheerfully, his construction of what I asked, and generally satisfactory.

When I think of the great amount of work done by him, and the attachment he had for the work, the length of time he held up under it, I am amazed - and can never cease to admire a man whose constancy and devotion to duty enabled him to perform acts of heroism never to be forgotten by those who knew him. I think that the performance of such duty was more to be prized than the acquisition of great wealth. To work for others was chosen by him rather than for self - self sacrifice to promote the welfare of the church and service of the Master were largely preferred to self profit or promotion. All this work was a labor of love and the performance of duty.

To have lived in close touch with Mr. Clarke, and to have understood his character, was an inspiration to any man. For a Christian worker and constant laborer for the Lord to have been closely associated with him was a benediction.

ELDER N. L. CLARKE

I like the term "elder": it is a New Testament title, and peculiarly fitted to our good Brother who has so recently left, us for his heavenly mansion. He was an elder indeed: not in years only, but in kindly advice and worthy example. His influence extended far and wide; and while firm in his convictions, was always conservative.

My first acquaintance with Brother Clarke was a night spent in his home near Decatur, in the latter part of 1847. At the time I was connected with the "South Western Baptist Chronicle", of New Orleans - He was a strong friend of the paper. We were associated, through correspondence, in another "Chronicle", several years later; and became still more intimate during the war up to the time of his death.

A staunch missionary: he "contended earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints", though always courteous, with brotherly love. His faithfulness to engagements was marvelous: his endurance wonderful, and mild firmness admirable. Though an uncompromising Baptist, he regarded other denominations with Christian charity, and was loved by all the people. So, I may say: "He is not dead, but sleepeth."

L.A. Duncan

REV. J. L. WILLIAMS, DALEVILLE.

I am pastor of the Baptist Church at Dekalb. A few days since I was perusing the early records of the body and came across something that I thought might be of interest to the preaching public in general.

It refers to that great man, our brother and friend, Rev. N. L. Clarke, and is as follows:

"Fellowship (now Dekalb) Baptist Church, Dekalb, Miss. "Sunday 5th April 1840. Received by letters from Lower Creek church, North Carolina, Brother Nathan L. Clarke and his wife, sister Evaline D. Clarke.

"Saturday, May 2nd. On motion adjourned. Prayer by Brother Clarke."

"Saturday, July 4th, he was appointed a committee to write rules of decorum. Saturday Aug. 1. Reported on same appointed to write Associational letter to the Choctaw Association.

Saturday 5th September said letter adopted by the church.

Saturday 3rd October, 1940. 3rd Item. On application, letters of dismissal were granted to Brother N. L. Clarke and sister Evalina D. Clarke.

I should be glad to see a history of this most wonderful man and extraordinary teacher and leader put in permanent form, and I furnish these items as connecting his Mississippi career to the "Old North State," and to show in that early day how busy he was in the Master's service. May his offspring prosper and be a blessing as he was, and the truths he advocated and lived continue to spread and flourish till all shall know and serve the Lord as he did, "from the rivers to the end of the earth."

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Wednesday, October 21, 1906

RET. J. A. HACKETT, MERIDIAN SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

I first saw Brother Clarke in July. He was then in the 50th year of his age. He was on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist State Convention which met with the Baptist Church in Meridian that year. I saw him just to know him the pulpit on the night of the first day was as the alternate to Dr. J. M. Lewis who was present, but sick) he preached the convention. I do not recall the text nor the time of thought pursued, only a few sayings, but have a definite recollection of his fine, robust personality, manly bearing, great earnestness, and clearness of speech, and further more, that he held the undivided attention of a packed house for more than an hour. The picture has never faded from my memory to this day, though I have not since seen him at any other meeting of the Convention.

It was my pleasure and profit to see him in a special meeting at Newton once, I think in 1875 at which time I became intimately acquainted with him, to need me of his former life, not a little of his amiable traits, and much of his noble and lovely character. He was old enough to be my father being 20 years my senior, but was one of the most companionable pastors with whom I ever labored. It was then that a kindly and real friendship came about between us that has continued until the end of his life, and that will be freshly renewed up to the time to be perpetuated forevermore. Since then I have been with him in five or six meetings of the General Association and always in agreeable accord and helpful cooperation as a time presiding officer, now well he has dispatched business and had his own peculiar way of administering parliamentary law which, however, is always just, effective and voluntary. He was emphatically the least of his people, but never contrary to, or in anywise in contravention of, the policies of the organization.

Brother Clarke was distinguished for an admirable quality of conservatism. He was unwilling to take liberties strenuously upon close and liberal construction of the New Testament, both in doctrine and practice. He looked upon a "thus saith the Lord" as final for what was to be done as well as what was to be believed. On that account he was in all things quite in sympathy with all of the denominational methods. For this, I greatly admired him and often said if he happened in any case to be a mite too conservative, it would serve as a wholesome check to some of the others of our Baptists kin, men who were confessedly very recklessly radical.